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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. The provision of wire and radio communications for the Ministry of the Merchant Fleet (MMF), is the responsibility of the Central Directorate for Communications and Electro-Radio-Navigation Equipment (Tsentral'nyy Upravleniye Svyazi i Elektro-Radio-Navigatsii), MMF. This directorate does not supply the only channel of communications for the MMF, however, as the facilities of the Ministry of Communications (Minsvyaz') are also used by the MMF. The facilities of Minsvyaz' are used to a considerably lesser extent than those of the Central Directorate.
2. The basic responsibilities of the Central Directorate for Communications include the following:
 - (a) Maintaining all telephone and radio communications within the MMF. Formerly the non-tuneable receivers and speakers which are placed throughout the Merchant Fleet for the amusement and enlightenment of the listeners were under the control of this Directorate. These devices have now been placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Communications (Minsvyaz').
 - (b) Assigning shipboard and shore communications equipment to Merchant Fleet activities.
 - (c) Organizing training programs for Merchant Fleet communications specialists and assigning these specialists to MMF activities upon completion of their training.
 - (d) Preparing and issuing equipment handbooks and training pamphlets for communications personnel. This item includes instructions relative to the operational phases of code and cipher work.
 - (e) Maintaining all electro-radio-navigation equipment. This includes radio, gyrocompasses and direction finding equipment.
 - (f) Developing improved methods of equipment operation and exploitation.

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3. There are certain basic principles and rules controlling the transmission of information within the MAF. Special precedence indicators are established for traffic sent by ordinary mail and that sent by radio and wire communications channels. The following precedence indicators control the speed with which traffic is handled:

(a) Ordinary mail

- (1) If there is no urgency attached to a letter it is sent in a routine manner without any precedence indicator.
- (2) If there is urgency connected with delivery of a letter it is marked "urgent" (Srochno).
- (3) If the delivery of a letter is very important it is marked "very urgent" (ves'ma srochnaya, v-srochnaya).

(b) Radiograms

- (1) There is no precedence indicator marked on messages which have no urgency attached to their delivery.
- (2) If there is urgency associated with the delivery of the message it is marked "lightning" (molniya).
- (3) The message is marked "deliver immediately" (vruchit' nemedlenno) if it is still more urgently in need of delivery.
- (4) Messages demanding the greatest speed of delivery are marked "deliver immediately to the person of the addressee" (vruchit' nemedlenno po mestu nakhozhdeniya). This means that the message is to be delivered to the addressee in person, even though he is not in his office. It would be necessary for the communications office to determine the whereabouts of the addressee and hand him the message.

(c) Telegrams

The telegrams sent by the Ministry of Communications are marked "governmental" (pravitel'stvennaya). This precedence indicator is limited to wires sent by the telegraph services of the Ministry of Communications.

(d) Telephone grams

The same precedence indicators are used for telephone grams as are marked on ordinary mail.

4. Messages sent out by voice over telephone lines constitute the largest percentage of the total number of messages transmitted both in the MAF and the entire Soviet Union. The wire communication equipment used by the MAF for this type of transmission is of US construction. [redacted] they are higher than the frequencies of normal telephone conversations.

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There is also a very high frequency radio telephone system in use between Fourteen Foot Roadsteads and Astrakhan which is also of US construction. This entire set (receiver, transmitter and handpiece) would weigh about 40 kilograms. The set has a range of about 100 to 150 kilometers. [redacted]

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5. In the beginning of 1949 the government took steps to limit the usage of radio communications and further cuts are constantly being made. Great efforts are being undertaken to extend the usage of telephone grams and ordinary mail in order to curtail the volume of radio communications. In furtherance of this, a limitation of 200 words has been placed on the length of radiograms. The official reason given for the decline in emphasis of radio communication was the desire to relieve the work load of the already overburdened radio stations. The reason accepted at Reydtanker headquarters, however, was the obvious simplicity of reading a message orally over the telephone as opposed to transmitting a message in Morse code by radio.

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[redacted]

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7. Only the people who have been assigned one of the special communications titles, such as head of steamship agency planning department - CHPM are allowed to send radiograms. If a person does not possess such a title he must then get the approval of one of the titled officials in order to have the message transmitted.

8. As a general rule the person sending the message is responsible for assigning the proper precedence to a message. If this responsibility is abused the violator will be admonished

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If a message is supposed to be sent in cipher and the sender gives it to the secretariat of the agency for transmission in plain text, a violation of security has occurred. The chief of the secret department (sekretniy otdel) may either report the incident or return the message to the originator for proper handling. If the matter is reported officially the offender probably will be brought to trial. This is a matter which is within the discretion of the head of the secret department, and if he is friendly with the heads of the other sections the incident will probably not be reported.

9. In June 1947, a decree of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers was handed down relative to the transmission of operational information pertaining to ministerial activities. Prior to this decree all such information had been sent openly in plain text traffic. By this decree certain types of information became classified and thenceforth had to be encoded.
 - (a) Figures revealing the volume and scope of ministerial operations.
 - (b) Disposition and deployment of Soviet fleets.
 - (c) Data on the numbers and types of workers
 - (d) Data relative to the technical condition of equipment.
 - (e) Information relative to accidents or catastrophes which might be used as anti-Soviet propaganda. (Revytanker usually had a couple of hundred accidents annually, two or three of which would result in fatalities.)
 - (f) Breakdowns or failures of equipment.
10. It became common practice for nearly all officials of the MAF to try to avoid having messages encoded. The reason was that there were numerous regulations to be followed and the people were reluctant to become involved in the established procedures. Most officials used covert means to send classified material by plain text channels in spite of the above decree.

For example if an official in Moscow requested a report from Reydtanker with regard to personnel status of the steamship agency it was classified information per se. The Moscow official probably had received, however, many such reports in the past from the agency and he simply would request the official to supply the information which was usually forthcoming at the particular time involved. Usually there were standard forms which were followed by the reporting agency for different types of information, such as wages and payrolls, numbers of workers and technicians, and hours worked. The head of the labor and wages department would simply take the blank form used in the desired report and fill in the necessary data to complete the form. He would then take the figures from the report form and either letter or number them in sequence and send these figures out in plain text without further identification of the text. The figures by themselves would mean nothing to anyone reading the message and certainly not to the head of the secret department. When the Moscow official received the message he would enter the data shown in the message on a duplicate of the originator's personnel form and thereby have all of the information which he had requested. This was very common practice in transmitting operational information by radio and wire communications.

11. A sample radio message blank has been reproduced below. The letters in parentheses have been supplied for ease in the description of the form.

RadioGram
(Radiogramma)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (a) Transmitted..... | (c) Precedence |
| (b) Received..... | |
| (d) From (city).....(e) Ser No | ...(f) Groups....(g) Date...Time... |
| (h) Addressee
City or place
Title
Name of person | |
| (i) Text of message | |
| (j) Originator's serial number.....
(k) Originator's title
(l) Originator's Name | |
| (a) This is the date and time that the radio operator commenced sending the message. | |
| (b) This is the date and time that the receiving operator acknowledged receipt of the message. | |

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- (c) The precedence assigned to the message by the originator is marked in this space.
- (d) This is the place from which the message is sent.
- (e) This is the serial number assigned to the message by the originating radio station. This number is assigned consecutively to all messages transmitted from the station and the first message sent out in the calendar year is #1. The message numbers are terminated at the end of each year and a new series commenced on January 1st.
- (f) This shows the number of words in the text of the message.
- (g) The message date and time assigned by the transmitting station is placed in this blank.
- (h) The place, title and name of the addressee is written in this space.
- (i) This space is for the text of the message.
- (j) At the end of the text the serial number assigned to the message by the originating agency is written. The secretariat for the originating agency assigns numbers to all outgoing messages and records these numbers with the names of the originating officials. It is this serial number that is referred to in replies by the addressees.
- (k) This is the title of the originating official. The titles in both (k) and (h) are generally the short form titles which have been assigned to the officials of the MMF.
- (l) This is the name of the originating official.

These message blanks were written out by hand in Reydtanker as there were only fifteen typewriters for the entire steamship agency. My writing was fairly good, but some of the officials took delight in writing poorly just to bedevil the poor radio operators.

12. Reydtanker operates a radio station which services all MMF activities in Astrakhan. Among the activities so served are:
- (a) Astrakhan Maritime Dry Cargo Port (Astrakhanskiy Morskiy Sukhogrurniy Port). (This was formerly the Astrakhan Dry Cargo Maritime Agency - Astrakhanskoe Sukhogrurnoe Morskoe Agentsvo-KaspFlot)
 - (b) Roadsteads Technical Fleet (ReydTekhFlot)
 - (c) Maritime Registry (Morskoy Registr)
 - (d) Ship Repair Yard i/n Karl Marks
 - (e) Ship Yard (Sudo Verf'), Merchant Fleet
 - (f) Basin Committee of the Seaman's Trade Union (BEROF)
 - (g) Basin Judge Advocate (BPROK)
 - (h) 8th Detachment of the Militarized Guard (Vos'moy Otryad Volkhr).
 - (i) Caspian Inspectorate of Port Facilities (Kaspiyskaya Inspektziya Portovogo Nadzora)

The Soviet Navy might use the local communication facilities of the MMF when conducting actual operations with Reydtanker, but not otherwise. Such operations in the past occurred when Reydtanker was engaged in piloting Navy vessels through the Volga Delta. Under no conditions would the MMF stations handle Navy traffic with a distant city such as Moscow or Odessa.

13. Reydtanker operates four radio stations which are located at the following places:

Astrakhan - on the Island of Zayashiy in the settlement of workers for the ship repair yard i/n 10th Anniversary of the October Revolution. There are four send-receive positions at this station; one for Astrakhan-Moscow, one for Astrakhan-ships, one for Astrakhan-Baku and one for Astrakhan-Gurev, Solo Olya, 14 Foot Roadsteads.

Solo Olya - This village is on the Volga Delta and has one send-receive station.

14 Foot Roadsteads - This station consists of two send-receive positions aboard the floating dock (debarcader) DGBASS.

Gurev - There is one send-receive position located on the island of Peshmoy and there was to be a second send-receive position added to this station.

14. Specific schedules were followed by the Astrakhan radio station of Reydtanker. This station handled a large amount of MMF traffic to and from Astrakhan. All transportation activities throughout the Soviet Union operate on Moscow time. Thus all broadcasts listed

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below are in terms of Moscow time.

Astrakhan-Moscow and return.

0000--0100
1200--1300
1800--1900

Astrakhan-Baku and return

0000--0100	1200--1300
0400--0500	1600--1700
0800--0900	2000--2100

Constant communications are maintained among the radio stations of Reydtanker. The stations located at Astrakhan, Selo Olya and Fourteen Foot Roadsteads also have communication with the radio stations of the Caspian Oil Tanker Steamship Agency (Kasptanker) which are located at Krasnovodsk, Makhachkala and Baku. Whenever one of the stations has traffic for a station of the other agency the former station comes up on the frequencies of the latter. There is a list of the frequencies utilized by all radio stations of the MMF in the Caspian Sea area. This list is posted in each MMF radio station to facilitate inter-port communications. Normally, however, only the 14 Foot Roadstead and Astrakhan radio stations would have contact with the stations of Kasptanker.

the following periods of broadcasting by radio were observed by ships of Reydtanker and the same times also applied to the ships of Kasptanker.

0200--0600	1400--1800
0800--1200	2000--2400

15. The Volga Oil Tanker Steamship Agency (Volgatanker), Ministry of the River Fleet (MinRech-Flot), also had a radio station which operated independently of the Reydtanker radio station. The Volgatanker station was located in Astrakhan and its address was Elling-Peschanaya Kosa.
16. The Ministry of Communications (MinSvyaz') operates a telegraph station in Astrakhan which is in constant operation and has no schedule. The station broadcasts on 335 meters.
17. Kasptanker operates radio stations at Baku, Makhachkala and Krasnovodsk which are in constant communication with each other. The Baku station broadcasts to Moscow during the following periods:
0000-0100
1200-1300
1800-1900
18. Radio traffic which is originated in the Caspian Sea area and addressed to either the Far East or Odessa areas must be relayed through Moscow. It is not a question of insufficient power of the transmitting stations, but simply because there have been no schedules established for direct communications between the Caspian Area and the Far East and Odessa areas. In the case of traffic being sent from Makhachkala or Krasnovodsk to Odessa the routing is through Baku to Moscow and thence to Odessa. Gurev would relay it's traffic through Astrakhan to Moscow and thence to Odessa.
19. A radiogram from Astrakhan to Moscow is generally delivered in less than twenty-four hours. If a radiogram is sent under the precedence of "lightning" (molniya) on the 1200 broadcast from Astrakhan to Moscow, it will be delivered to the addressee that same day. Telegraph service between the same cities usually takes two days while mail generally requires five to seven days for delivery.
20. Shore stations and large 10,000-ton tankers in the Caspian Sea have emergency radio stations. These stand-by sets are kept in readiness for the eventuality of a failure in the main communication station. the regular frequencies would be used in order to avoid the difficulties encountered in trying to shift frequencies. The MMF requires that all emergency radio stations maintain separate sources of power for the main and emergency radio stations.
21. Classified traffic is sent to the secret department (sekretniy otel) where it is enciphered and then transmitted by the radio station. Telegraph lines are generally not utilized for this type of transmission. In an encoded message the names of addressees and originators are not encoded nor are the short form titles which are used in communications. If long form titles are used in the heading they must be encoded.

The Ministry of the Merchant Fleet does not possess any cipher machines in Astrakhan. such machines are very expensive and scarce. The MCB in Astrakhan is supposed to have some of these cipher machines.

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22.

[REDACTED] over-lapping or intermingling of duties between radio and telegraph operators. Generally the two groups of personnel have slightly different qualifications. The radio operator is better paid, approximately 20% higher wages, and is generally of greater ability than the telegraph operator. A radio operator would have little trouble in becoming a telegraph operator, but the reverse would not necessarily be true.

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